

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 29, 2011

The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are concerned about the Federal Aviation Administration's proposal to allow public access to general aviation aircraft movements. This is a troubling reversal of a decade-old policy put in place to uphold the privacy rights of thousands of Americans.

In light of advances of for-profit flight tracking services, Congress included a provision in the 2000 FAA reauthorization bill enabling the Block Aircraft Registration Request (BARR) program. This program provides owners of general aviation aircraft the ability to prevent the public dissemination of their aircraft movements. For reasons of individual security, privacy, and business competitiveness, this program is essential.

Claims have been made that revocation of this program is needed to promote greater transparency. While all Americans support an open and transparent government process, maintaining the BARR program is about the preservation of personal citizens' right to privacy and has nothing to do with shedding light on our federal government. Others have also argued that this program enables operators of business aircraft to avoid detection from law enforcement. The Department of Homeland Security and other law enforcement agencies have always had the ability to monitor and track the location of users of the national airspace system, and this won't change with the continuation of the BARR program. BARR simply prevents unauthorized, non-governmental actors from knowing the location of private citizens.

If the proposed changes are put in place, anyone with a computer and easily accessible tracking technology can cyber-stalk owners or operators of general aviation aircraft. We also are concerned that this decision sets a dangerous precedent for the ability of the government to disseminate the travel information of any citizen, regardless of the mode of transportation.

United States Senate

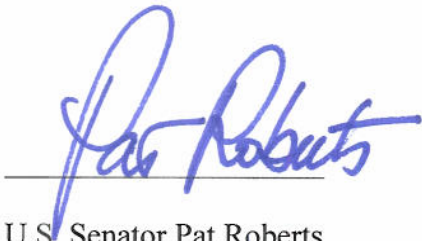
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

A wide range of groups have expressed concerns about the FAA's proposal, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, the Business Roundtable, and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Lastly, the issue of the BARR program is currently being debated by the conferees on the FAA Reauthorization bill. It is premature to unilaterally implement a regulation on a legislative issue currently before Congress.

Thank you again for your consideration of this important issue. We look forward to your response, and working with you as we continue to create a regulatory environment for U.S. citizens that affords them the greatest protections under the Constitution.

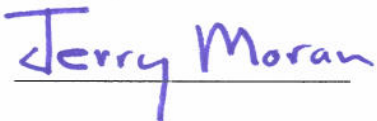
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Pat Roberts", written over a horizontal line.

U.S. Senator Pat Roberts

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Mark Begich", written over a horizontal line.


U.S. Senator Mark Begich

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jerry Moran", written over a horizontal line.

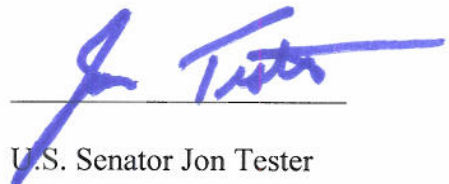
U.S. Senator Jerry Moran

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Mark R. Warner", written over a horizontal line.

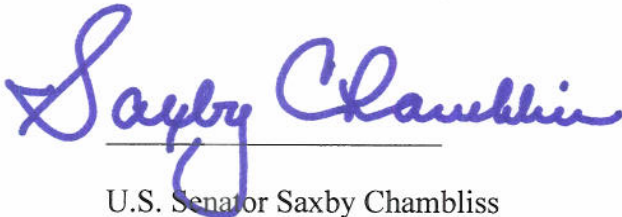
U.S. Senator Mark Warner

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "John Boozman", written over a horizontal line.

U.S. Senator John Boozman

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jon Tester", written over a horizontal line.

U.S. Senator Jon Tester

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Saxby Chambliss", written over a horizontal line.

U.S. Senator Saxby Chambliss

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Ben Nelson", written over a horizontal line.

U.S. Senator Ben Nelson

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U.S. Senator Tom Coburn



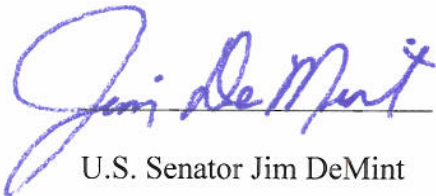
U.S. Senator Mark Pryor



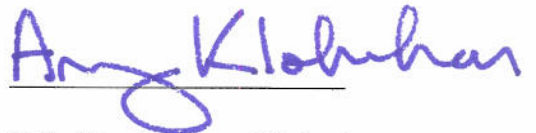
U.S. Senator Thad Cochran



U.S. Senator Bill Nelson



U.S. Senator Jim DeMint



U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar



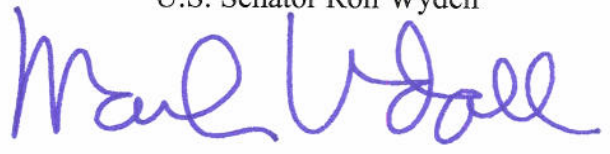
U.S. Senator Michael Enzi



U.S. Senator Ron Wyden



U.S. Senator James Inhofe



U.S. Senator Mark Udall



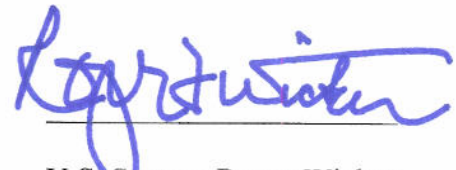
U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski



U.S. Senator John Thune



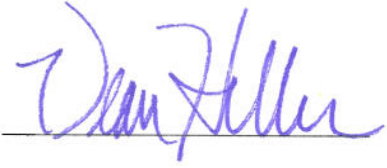
U.S. Senator David Vitter



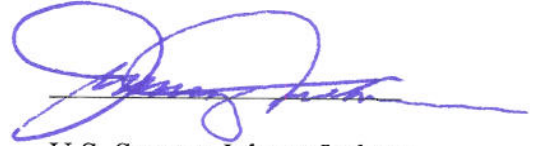
U.S. Senator Roger Wicker

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Dean Heller", written over a horizontal line.

U.S. Senator Dean Heller

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Johnny Isakson", written over a horizontal line.

U.S. Senator Johnny Isakson

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Mike Johanns", written over a horizontal line.

U.S. Senator Mike Johanns

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Kelly A. Ayotte", written over a horizontal line.

U.S. Senator Kelly Ayotte
